

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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FRANK MORRISON, Secretary-Treasurer

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LABOR AND THE POLITICAL CONVENTIONS

What Labor Asked

Reply of Democrats

Reply of Republicans

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Unemployed Army Numbers 11,259,000

More Than 5,000,000 Supported by Government Funds—Employers Extort 17 Per Cent Larger Output from Workers But Increase Their Buying Power Only 6 Per Cent.

By A. F. of L. News Service.

Washington, D. C., July 4.—Despite the upward march of the industrial recovery, there are still over 11,000,000 working men and women trapped in the unemployed army with little hope of jobs and wages, according to the monthly report on unemployment by President William Green of the American Federation of Labor.

The depressing picture of the situation is emphasized by the fact that over 4,000,000 persons are still waiting to rely on Government funds for support. In addition, employers generally are using various methods to squeeze a larger amount of production from their workers without increasing their wages proportionately.

"With business activity only 5.7 per cent below normal in May, by the Annual index, 11,259,000 men and women were still without normal work in industry, trade or agriculture," Mr. Green said.

"It is significant that, while employment gains this Spring have created at most temporary jobs for 1,200,000 in January, these gains fall far short of the employment needed to create jobs for all. At the present rate, unemployment is not only continuing to rise but is likely to rise far beyond 1929 levels to not only unemployment but to underemployment, which requires a higher level of workers' buying power than has previously achieved."

Since the bottom of depression, March, 1933, up to May, 1936, nearly 6,000,000 men and women have gone back to work. The number seeking painful work has increased by 1,200,000 in that period, so that the net decrease in unemployment has amounted to 4,800,000.

"It is significant that employers' buying power increased at a much faster rate and the balance between workers' buying power and industrial production runs better kept during the early part of NIRA than during the latter part. For in the first 10 months of NIRA, 2,300,000 went back to work, while in the first 10 months since NIRA, when business was free from NIRA regulations only 1,700,000 went back to work. Also, under NIRA in the year 1934, production increased 4 per cent over the previous year, but the buying power of workers increased 17 per cent and workers' buying power since NIRA cannot expect to achieve the productivity of workers in the unemployed to work."

Because of the dire need in which millions of the unemployed have found themselves this Spring, more than 4,000,000 persons are still dependent on Government funds for their livelihood. Labor Department reports show that 3,430,000 of the unemployed were at work on WPA and FERA in May and it is estimated that more than 1,500,000 were state and local relief rolls. While a number of these unemployed persons are workers who want work and are capable of doing it, they are not being helped. We need to put these millions on industrial payrolls so that they may be taken off the Government relief rolls.

"The month of May marked the peak of the spring buying season. While trade union members report that, for the first time, employment gains have carried over into the first part of June, we must look forward now to two months of summer doldrums when many who found work this Spring will be laid off. Trade union weighted figures show: 2.3 per cent of the unemployed were employed in June, 13.7 per cent in May, 13.1 per cent in April as against 18.4 per cent in May, 1935."

More Jobs for Building Trades
"Employment gains in May and June have been more striking in building than any other industry. Figures for building in the country as a whole show that employment increased by 18,000 from April to May, making the month the highest May since 1931. Building employment in May, 1936, exceeds last year by 200,000. Trade union figures for June show continuing growth although not so large as May. In June this year 29 per cent of the building trades membership were out of work compared to 31 per cent in June last year."

Other industries showing employment gains from April to May were: manufacturing, 44,000; railroads, 19,000; farms, 34,000. In all, employment increased by 294,000 in May, which compares with 720,000 in April.

Mr. Hopkins said the money would keep 3,000,000 workers employed through the Summer at the wage prevailing in their local communities. The prevailing wage rate was made mandatory in the Work Relief Appropriation Bill.

In an order issued by Mr. Hopkins the WPA wage in southern Ohio, which was increased from \$19 per month to \$21, it was stated that the increase would be effective in communities of less than 5,000 population in Ohio, Florida, (Continued on Page 2)

UNEMPLOYMENT
Planned public works relief program ready for application when unemployment arrives.
A census of the unemployed.

UNEMPLOYMENT
We believe that unemployment is a national problem, and that it is an inescapable obligation of our Government to meet it in a national way. Due to our stimulation of private business, more than 5,000,000 people have been re-employed; and we shall continue to maintain that the first objective of a program of economic security is maximum employment in private industry at adequate wages. Where business fails to supply such employment, we believe that work at prevailing wages should be provided in cooperation with state and local governments on useful public projects, to the end that the national economy and the skill and energy of the worker may be utilized, his morale maintained, and the unemployed assured the opportunity to earn the necessities of life.

UNEMPLOYMENT
The only permanent solution of the unemployment problem is the absorption of the unemployed by industry and agriculture. To that end we advocate:
Removal of restrictions on production.
Abandonment of all New Deal policies that raise production costs, increase the cost of living and thereby restrict buying, reduce volume and prevent re-employment.
Encouragement, instead of hindrance, to legitimate business.
Elimination of Government competition with private payrolls.
Adoption of such other policies as will furnish a chance for individual enterprise, industrial expansion and the restoration of jobs.

Relief
The necessities of life must be provided for the needy, and hope must be restored pending recovery. The administration of relief is a major feature of the New Deal. It has been faithful to those who most deserve our sympathy. To end confusion, partisanship, waste and incompetence, we pledge:

1. The return of responsibility for relief administration to non-political agencies familiar with community problems.
2. Federal grants-in-aid to the states and territories, while the need exists, upon compliance with these conditions: (a) a fair proportion of the total relief burden to be provided from revenues of states and local governments; (b) all engaged in relief administration to be selected on the basis of merit and fitness; (c) adequate provision to be made for the encouragement of those persons who are trying to become self-supporting.
3. Undertaking of Federal public works only on their merits and separate from the administration of relief.
4. A prompt determination of the facts concerning relief and unemployment.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND OLD AGE PENSIONS
We have built foundations for the security of those who are faced with the hazards of unemployment and old age; for the orphaned, the crippled and the blind. On the foundation of the Social Security Act we are determined to erect a structure of economic security for all our people, making sure that this benefit shall keep step with the ever-increasing capacity of America to provide a high standard of living for all its citizens.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND OLD AGE PENSIONS
We propose a system of old-age security, based upon the following principles:

1. We approve a pay-as-you-go policy, which requires of each generation the support of the aged and the determination of what is just and adequate.
2. Every American citizen over 65 should receive the supplementary minimum necessary to provide a minimum income sufficient to protect him or her from want.
3. Each state and territory, upon complying with simple and general minimum standards, should receive from the Federal Government a graduated contribution in proportion to its own, up to a fixed maximum.
4. To make this program consistent with sound fiscal policy the Federal revenues for this purpose must be provided from the proceeds of a direct tax widely distributed. All will be benefited, and all should contribute.

We propose to encourage adoption by the states and territories of honest and practical measures for meeting the problems of unemployment insurance.

The unemployment insurance and old-age annuity sections of the present Social Security Act are unworkable and deny benefits to about two-thirds of our adult population, including professional men and women and all those engaged in agriculture and domestic service and the self-employed. The insurance is a heavy burden upon all. The so-called reserve fund estimated at \$47,000,000 for old-age insurance is no reserve at all because the fund will contain only the Government's promise to pay, while the taxes collected in the guise of premiums will be wasted by the Government in reckless and extravagant political schemes.

PROTECTION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
For the protection of government itself and promotion of its efficiency we pledge the immediate expansion of the merit system through the classified civil service—which was first established and fostered by Democratic supplies—to all non-policy-making positions in the Federal service.

We shall subject to the civil service law all continuing positions which, because of the emergency, have been exempt from its operation.

PROTECTION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
We pledge ourselves to the merit system, actually destroyed by New Deal spoilsmen. It should be reformed, improved and extended. We will provide such conditions as will make possible a permanent system in government service to young men and women of ability, irrespective of party affiliations.

HOUSING
A declaration in favor of a constructive home-owning and home-building program, with specific approval of the Wagner Housing Act.

HOUSING
We maintain that our people are entitled to decent, adequate housing at a price they can afford to pay. The last three years the Federal Government, having saved more than 2,000,000 homes from foreclosure, has taken the first steps in our history to provide decent housing for people of meager incomes. We believe every encouragement should be given to the housing of new homes by private enterprise; and that the Government should steadily increase its housing program toward the goal of adequate housing for those forms through economic necessities to live in unhealthy and slum conditions.

HOURS, WAGES, RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

Fifty-six week and shorter work day in private industry and Government service.
High wages and the establishment and maintenance of an adequate annual income for the working people and shorter his hours; we have undertaken to put an end to the sweating labor of his wife and children; we have written into the law of the land his right to collective bargaining and self-organization free from the interference of employers; we have provided Federal machinery for the peaceful settlement of labor disputes.

We will continue to protect the worker and we will guard his rights, both as wage-earner and consumer, in the production and consumption of all commodities, including coal and water power and other natural resource products.

The worker has been returned to the road to freedom and prosperity. We will keep him on that road.

FREE SPEECH, FREE PRESS AND ASSEMBLY
Re-affirmation of the rights of free speech, press and assembly and their exercise.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION
Continuation of vocational training and education with adequate financial support. Wholehearted support for education, especially the public school system.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Maintenance of adequate appropriations for the U. S. Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics under its jurisdiction.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
Establishment and maintenance of an adequate and competent national employment service.

CHILD LABOR AMENDMENT
A declaration recommending that the states which have not already acted ratify the Child Labor Amendment to the Federal Constitution at the earliest possible date.

IMMIGRATION
Continuation of present restrictive immigration policy and its progressive application as further needs develop. Application of restrictive legislation to seamen.

SOVIET RUSSIA
The withdrawal of the recognition of the Soviet Government because of its disregard and violation of treaty obligations in connection with Communist propaganda through the Third Internationale, having as one of its aims the preparation for the overthrow of our Government or the bringing about of a change in the political or social rule of our Government by force.

THE CONSTITUTION
A declaration in favor of the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States which provides that no law be declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court except by not less than two-thirds vote of its members.

PUERTO RICO
The fullest measure of home rule for Puerto Rico with the right to elect their own governor who will appoint members of his own cabinet with the view to prepare for final statehood.

HOUSING
A declaration in favor of a constructive home-owning and home-building program, with specific approval of the Wagner Housing Act.

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HOURS, WAGES, RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

We have given the army of America's industrial workers something more substantial than the Republican's dinner pail full of promises. We have increased the worker's pay and shortened his hours; we have undertaken to put an end to the sweating labor of his wife and children; we have written into the law of the land his right to collective bargaining and self-organization free from the interference of employers; we have provided Federal machinery for the peaceful settlement of labor disputes.

We will continue to protect the worker and we will guard his rights, both as wage-earner and consumer, in the production and consumption of all commodities, including coal and water power and other natural resource products.

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FREE SPEECH, FREE PRESS AND ASSEMBLY
We shall continue to guard the freedom of speech, press and assembly and assembly which our Constitution guarantees; with equal rights to all and special privileges to none.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION
We have opened the door to stay in school, given them constructive occupation; aided youth to opportunity which 12 years of Republican neglect had closed. Our youth have been returned to the road to freedom and prosperity. We will keep them on that road.

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Maintenance of adequate appropriations for the U. S. Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics under its jurisdiction.

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IMMIGRATION
Continuation of present restrictive immigration policy and its progressive application as further needs develop. Application of restrictive legislation to seamen.

SOVIET RUSSIA
Dedicated to a government of liberal American principles, we are determined to oppose equally the demands of Communism and the menace of concealed Fascism.

THE CONSTITUTION
The Constitution proposes to meet many pressing national problems solely by action of the separate States. We know that drought, dust storms, floods, minimum wages, maximum hours, child labor and working conditions in industry, monopolistic trusts and business practices, which are adequately handled exclusively by 48 separate state legislatures, 48 separate state administrations and 48 separate state courts. Transactions and activities which inevitably overflow state boundaries call for both state and federal treatment. We have sought and will continue to seek to meet these problems through legislation within the Constitution.

If these problems cannot be effectively solved by legislation within the Constitution, we shall seek such clarifying amendment as will assure the legislatures of the several states and to the Congress of the United States, each within its proper jurisdiction, the power to enact those laws which state and federal legislatures, within their respective spheres, shall find necessary, in order adequately to regulate commerce, protect public health and safety and safeguard economic security. Thus we propose to maintain the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

PUERTO RICO
The fullest measure of home rule for Puerto Rico with the right to elect their own governor who will appoint members of his own cabinet with the view to prepare for final statehood.

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